

I have taken these actions pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct U.S. foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive. I appreciate the continued support of the Congress in these actions.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Strom Thurmond, President pro tempore of the Senate.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting the Report on the
National Emergency With Respect to
the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
(Serbia and Montenegro)**

December 15, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to the Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) emergency declared in Executive Order 12808 on May 30, 1992, and with respect to the Kosovo emergency declared in Executive Order 13088 on June 9, 1998.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

**Letter to Congressional Leaders on
Continuation of the National
Emergency With Respect to the
Lapse of the Export Administration
Act of 1979**

December 15, 1999

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

As required by section 204 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1703(c)) and section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C.

1641(c)), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency declared by Executive Order 12924 of August 19, 1994, to deal with the threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States caused by the lapse of the Export Administration Act of 1979.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate.

**Remarks at a Democratic National
Committee Gay and Lesbian
Luncheon**

December 16, 1999

Well, thank you very much. First, I want to thank Mark and Peter and Andy and Charles for co-hosting, chairing this. And I thank all of you for being here.

You said some very kind things in your introduction. I'd like to thank you for being my personal friend for many years and for all the issues we've discussed and all the things we've talked about, including before I became President. I'd like to thank the people here from the White House who have helped me to make this the most inclusive administration in history. And I want to thank all of you for all the issues that we've fought on.

We actually had a very good year last year in many ways, and I got most of what I wanted in the budget at the end. But we didn't get the hate crimes legislation, so I ask you to stay with me and to make a good effort. I think we've got a much better chance to pass it in 2000, and I hope you will help me with that.

I also think we should keep trying to get a vote on the "ENDA" legislation, which I strongly support. And one final thing—Sandy Thurman's here; we talked about this on the way in—while we've made remarkable progress with HIV and AIDS in the United States, it is still raging out of control in much of Africa and increasingly in parts of Asia. And I think we ought to do more on that

around the world, and we're going to try to do more.

But I want to ask for your support as we go to the Congress, and ask them to take a strong stand on that. Otherwise, you're going to see whole countries collapse under the weight of AIDS-related death, AIDS orphans, and managing the situation. Those are three issues I wanted to mention.

The last point I'd like to make is this. I've said this a lot of times, and all of you have heard me give this speech, so I won't give the whole speech. But if we have enjoyed any success in these last 7 years—and I think we've had quite a lot of it—part of it was because I had an idea of what I wanted America to look like at century's end and at the beginning of the new millennium.

It is very important to have a vision and to pursue it and very important not to forget your mission when things happen which are designed to make you forget your mission. I think it is—now, in this election season, I think it's very important for us, not only as Democrats but as citizens, to get the American people to focus on the importance of doing that all over again, of having a vision for the first couple of decades of the 21st century, of imagining what we want America to be like, what we want the world to be like, and developing a strategy and a set of ideas to get there.

We have never before, ever, in my lifetime and perhaps never in our history, enjoyed as much economic and social progress and national self-confidence with the absence of domestic crisis or foreign threat. Therefore, we have the greatest opportunity in our lifetime and perhaps ever to shape the future for our children. We ought to spend a lot of time defining and debating what that future should be.

And when the next administration starts in the new century and the next Congress sits, they ought to sit and start with a mandate from the American people based on those big questions.

Now I have been through enough elections to believe that the primary determinants of the outcome of the election are the quality of the candidates and the subject of the campaign, assuming that both sides have enough resources to get their message

out. The other guys will always outspend us, and we know why they've got more money than we do. And it's okay as long as we have enough. But assuming we have enough, an election's outcome is determined by the quality of the candidates and the subject of the election. I believe if the subject of the election is, what are the big issues we have to deal with between now and the end of the next decade, we win, because the American people agree with us about the big things. And we just have to keep pushing forward.

The public opinion—the people of this country nearly always get it right if they have enough time and enough information. That's why we're still around here after 200 years. We wouldn't be if that weren't true. And just on the issue of equal rights and the absence of discrimination, there's been a sea change in public opinion in this country in the last 7 years. We're a long way from where we were in '92, when, to put it mildly, there were some fairly visceral responses to the positions that I took in the campaign. It's a very different world out there now.

So I ask you not only for your money—I'm grateful for that—but I ask you to think about all the various ways in which we can make sure that the American people use this moment to be responsible dreamers, instead of just to fritter the election away in some distracted, indulgent, or mean-spirited or shortsighted way, because if this thing is about the big issues and the long-time vision, we're going to do just fine. And you can have a big impact on that.

The only other thing I would say is, I think there is a very great deal we can accomplish next year. Conventional wisdom is, in election years you don't get much done. That's not necessarily so. I can remember we got a great deal done in 1996 in the election. In '98, we got a lot done in the 11th hour, simply because Congress wanted to go home. [Laughter]

So stay with me, keep focused on this, too. We can get quite a lot done next year if we have the discipline to do it and the will.

The last thing I want to say is, I am very grateful for having had the chance to serve and to work with you and to be President at this particular moment in history, when

doors were being opened and a new chapter in the civil rights history of America was being written, and I hope we can do more and do better.

But I'm very grateful for having had the chance to do this, and I have said many times I wish we could have done more, but I'm glad we did what we did. And I feel very fortunate just to have had the chance to serve at this moment, thanks in no small measure because of the progress we've made on these issues, and I thank you for that, too.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:55 p.m. in the Colonial Room at the Mayflower Hotel. In his remarks, he referred to luncheon cochairs Peter Amstein, software developer, Microsoft Corporation; Mark Fox, finance strategy adviser, FOX Group; Charles Nolan, fashion designer; Ellen Tracy, Inc.; and Andy Tobias, treasurer, Democratic National Campaign Committee, who introduced the President. The President also referred to ENDA, the proposed "Employment and Non-Discrimination Act."

Remarks Following Discussions With Prime Minister Barak of Israel and Foreign Minister al-Shara of Syria

December 16, 1999

Middle East Peace Process

Over the past 48 hours, Israel and Syria have taken a critical step in the journey toward peace. That journey will be a difficult one, but with courage and perseverance on both sides, the result will be deeply rewarding to the people of Israel and to the people of Syria.

In the course of their meetings with Secretary Albright and with me, Prime Minister Barak and Foreign Minister Shara agreed to make every effort to reach peace between Israel and Syria as part of a just, lasting, and comprehensive Middle East peace, based on United Nations resolutions 242 and 338, and the Madrid terms of reference. To that end, the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister agreed to return to Washington to continue their negotiations on an intensive basis beginning January 3, 2000, about 2 weeks from now.

They have requested the United States to participate in these negotiations, and we are honored to do so. They agreed to take steps to ensure that these negotiations will be conducted in a productive and positive atmosphere.

We are witnessing a new beginning in the effort to achieve a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. With Syrian-Israeli negotiations off to a good start, Israeli-Lebanese negotiations expected to begin soon, and the Palestinian track well underway, we can truly set our sights on a new and different Middle East.

As I emphasized from the outset, the journey will be tough. Nothing in the past 48 hours should lead us to believe otherwise. But the parties are embarked on this path. They have agreed there should be no looking back, for the sake of our generations and generations yet to come.

I thank the Prime Minister and his team. I thank Foreign Minister Shara and his team. I thank Secretary Albright and those on the American team. All of them have worked hard. And I want Israel and Syria to know they can count on the United States every step of the way.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:40 p.m. in the West Portico at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Ehud Barak of Israel and Foreign Minister Farouk al-Shara of Syria.

Proclamation 7261—55th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge

December 16, 1999

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

By the winter of 1944, the United States and our Allies had turned the tide of the Second World War. Allied forces had liberated